

# In the News

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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## Inside this issue:

Message from the Mayor	1
Restoring the Lincoln Cottage	2
Community Profile	2
Arrests in the Colonel Brooks Homicides	3
Adoption Resource Center Opens	3
Restaurant Summit at Rosa Mexicano	4
Transfer of Fort Reno Park to the District	4
Mayor's Week in Review	5
District Activities	5
Community News	6
Upcoming Events	6

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## Message from the Mayor

I'm sad to say that, as many of our readers know, the District of Columbia began this year on an extremely tragic note. The slaying of Ballou High School student James Richardson on February 2 and the death of 14-year-old Jahkema Princess Hansen on January 23 in the Sursum Corda Cooperative complex sent shockwaves through our city. Two young lives in our city were claimed by senseless violence.

James Richardson was a student and athlete from Ballou High School. James, who went by the nickname "J-Rock," was shot to death in the middle of the day, in the middle of a hallway at his own high school. During the same incident, another young man was shot at Ballou. The 18-year-old victim was taken to an area hospital, where he was admitted for treatment for an apparently non-life-threatening injury. His identity is being withheld because he is a witness in the case. Another Ballou student has been arrested in connection with the shooting.

Princess Hansen was slain in a townhouse in Northwest DC because she was thought to be a witness to a homicide. Our prayers go out to the families of the victims.

In order to listen to and engage in dialogue with residents in the Ballou community, I joined other city leaders on February 3 at a community meeting at Ballou High School. Hearing their pain and frustration, I reiterated my continued vigilance in working together as a city to put a stop to violence in our schools and elsewhere.

Our schools must be sanctuaries for our children. Violence has no place in school buildings. We must rededicate ourselves to the protection of our children who rely on us to keep them safe. I have asked Chief Ramsey to begin to take over the responsibility for security in our public schools. The Council and the School Board appear supportive of this proposal and we will work in the weeks and months ahead to make this happen. The agencies of the District government fully support Interim District of Columbia Public Schools Superintendent Elfreda Massie as she works to provide our school children with a safe learning environment. Bringing an end to the violence will take a collective, community effort. Community leaders, school officials, government leaders, clergy and students must come together for the sake of our future and demand an end to the violence.

Although one individual has been charged in the death of James Richardson, this case remains under investigation by members of the MPD's Violent Crimes Branch. Anyone with information about this case is asked to call police at (202) 727-9099. For more information on the case, please visit MPD's website at [www.mpd.dc.gov](http://www.mpd.dc.gov).



## AGENCY WEBSITES

[Office of Tax and Revenue](#)

[Department of Parks and Recreation](#)

[Department of Employment Services](#)

[Metropolitan Police Department](#)

[Office of Boards and Commissions](#)

[Commission on the Arts and Humanities](#)

# Restoring the Lincoln Cottage

Preserving our city's invaluable historic places is incredibly important, and on January 30, I joined a group of committed individuals to help preserve one of our treasures.

The President Lincoln and Soldiers' Home National Monument, near 16<sup>th</sup> and Upshur Streets, NW, also known as Lincoln Cottage, is where President Abraham Lincoln resided when he drafted the Emancipation Proclamation. Thanks to a generous group of donors and a valuable partnership between the District and federal governments, the cottage is being restored.

As our citizens who are history buffs know, on April 16, 1862, the US Congress passed the District of Columbia Emancipation Act, making black Washingtonians the first freed slaves in the nation. This was nine months before President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in January 1863.

The Emancipation Proclamation began the process of redefining African-Americans not as slaves but as full citizens. Its issuance changed the Civil War from simply a war to preserve the Union into a war for human freedom.

I'm proud to say Lincoln Cottage is also a site identified for inclusion in our city's African American Heritage Trail—a cultural heritage corridor spanning the eight wards of the District with over 200 sites associated with African-American history and culture.

Lincoln Cottage was selected for restoration from among 1,000 "Save America's Treasures" sites across the United States. It is the eighth of 12 Save America's Treasures sites to be highlighted on Home and Garden TV's Restore America series. As a part of HGTV's public affairs initiative, Restore America: A Salute to Preservation, the network donated \$1 million to the National Trust for the restoration and preservation of the 12 Save America's Treasures sites, and the network highlights the restoration efforts of one of these sites each month. The network renewed its commitment and will contribute another \$1 million to restore 12 additional Save America's Treasures sites in 2005.

I hope our residents join me in celebrating the restoration of this historical cottage, which is embedded in a residential neighborhood bordered by universities, hospitals and churches.

## Community Profile

### Rev. Margaret M. Graham

Rev. Margaret M. Graham, the rector at St. John's Episcopal Church of the Georgetown Parish, is best described as an urban priest who walks the community. A Ward 3 resident, she has been a tireless fighter against child abuse and neglect in the Washington, DC, community for over 30 years.

"We live in a city that has enormous challenges," Rev. Graham said. "There *is* hope if we focus on children as priorities...we need to think of children as being sacred."

Her life-long commitment to volunteerism began as a child, when she used to canvas for the American Red Cross by selling poppies. Rev. Graham's adult highlights include helping to create the national Child Protection Program and helping to open the city's largest homeless shelter at 2<sup>nd</sup> and D Streets, NW, the Community for Creative Non-Violence. She also directed the "Give Five" program at Independent Sector, a national program to increase philanthropic giving and volunteering in communities.

The many leadership positions she has held include: founding board member of Covenant House and the Bright Beginnings Homeless Day Care Center, president of the National Alliance to End Homelessness, and president of the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse.

Rev. Graham says that service is natural to her, and that "we are all the fabric of the community." In 1982, the Junior League of Washington created the Margaret Graham Volunteer Service Scholarship Award to recognize the graduating senior from DC Public Schools who has demonstrated outstanding volunteer leadership.

Rev. Graham is the September 2003 adult winner of the Mayor's Community Service Award, sponsored by the DC Commission on National and Community Service. If you would like to nominate a youth or adult for the monthly award, visit [www.cnscs.dc.gov](http://www.cnscs.dc.gov) for nomination information, or call (202) 727-9461.



## LINK TO OTHER WEBSITES

[DC Agenda](#)

[Hands on DC](#)

[DC Convention and Tourism](#)

[DC Public Library](#)

# Arrests in the Colonel Brooks Homicides

On January 27, Metropolitan Police Chief Charles Ramsey and I announced the arrest of two suspects in the homicides at Colonel Brooks Tavern in the Brookland neighborhood of Ward 5, which took place on April 6, 2003. On January 28, we announced that a third suspect was arrested in this case; and on January 29, we announced that a fourth suspect was found dead in Richmond, Virginia.

The triple homicide that occurred inside Colonel Brooks Tavern was a tragic crime that not only cut short the lives of three employees, but also shocked and outraged the Brookland community in Northeast, which saw the tavern as an important center of community life.

Our city's sympathies and prayers go out to the families of Neomi Payne, Rodney Barnes and Joshua Greenberg, who were slain last April doing what they did every Sunday morning—getting ready to serve brunch to the community that considers Colonel Brooks part of their extended families.

I realize that these arrests cannot bring back loved ones, but I hope they do bring some measure of peace. Our prayers and our support are also with the owners, employees and patrons of Colonel Brooks. All of them have been models of strength and determination throughout this ordeal.

I join Chief Ramsey in commending members of the Metro Police Department's Violent Crimes Branch, Major Case Squad, United States Marshals Service, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Baltimore City Police, United States Park Police, Prince George's County Police, Colonial Heights Police, Naval Criminal Investigative Service and others for their hard work and efforts in closing this case.

For complete information on the arrests in this case, please visit our [Metropolitan Police Department's website](#).

# Adoption Resource Center Opens

On January 27, I joined local officials and adoption activists to open the District's new Adoption Resource Center in Northwest. Olivia Golden, director of our Child and Family Services Agency, and Felicia Holley, director of the Adoption Resource Center, helped me cut the ribbon to officially open this fantastic new center.

The Adoption Resource Center is not an adoption agency but rather a support to people who are in the process of adopting a child in Washington, DC. It is a new and unique local resource developed with Congressional funding. At the ribbon cutting ceremony, the Freddie Mac Foundation announced a contribution of \$60,000 that will allow the Adoption Resource Center to expand into additional space at its location and to hold more training, support, and other group events onsite.

This exciting new center offers a variety of free or low-cost services to District residents in any stage of adopting a District child or teen. Among these services are: support groups, short-term counseling, a resource library, seminars for adoptive parents, and information about and referral to organizations that provide other adoption-related services throughout the city. Families who have already adopted in Washington, DC can call the center's 24-hour crisis helpline for emergency assistance with post-adoption issues, concerns, and challenges.

The idea for the Adoption Resource Center came from my Advisory Commission on Permanent Homes for Children. Now that this innovative, grassroots recommendation has become a reality. I hope every family adopting children in the District will take advantage of all the Adoption Resource Center has to offer.

As an adoptee and also as the Mayor of this wonderful city, I'm always grateful to celebrate the progress we're making in adoption in our city. I have made a commitment to improve the well being of children in the District and to ensure that every child has a permanent and loving home.

I continue to encourage all who have not, to open their hearts and their doors to a needy, yet deserving child. More than 40 years ago, my parents made the choice to open their home to one more child. In my life it has made a world of difference. I'm a living example of the difference a caring family can make in the life of a foster child.

The center, located at 1004 6th Street, NW, is open from 9 am to 5 pm Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; 9 am to 8 pm Tuesday and Thursday; and by appointment on Saturday. Please call (202) 289-1057 for more information or to make an appointment.



## Restaurant Summit at Rosa Mexicano

The restaurant scene in the District just keeps getting better and better, and on January 28, I addressed a group of local business leaders on that very issue.

I hosted the first of four quarterly retail summits that will occur this year. The January 28 summit focused on attracting restaurants to District neighborhoods. Future summits involve clothing, home furnishings, and grocery stores/big box retailers.

As some of our readers know, one of my major economic development platforms as Mayor has been attracting retail to the District. New retail stores in our city enhance our property and sales tax revenues, create jobs for District residents, and allow our citizens to purchase basic goods and services within our own city. I hope these retail summits will also lead to additional visits by retailers and more store openings.

In conjunction with this retail attraction effort, last year I launched a major new economic development initiative that we call *city living: dc style!* This marketing campaign and Housing Expo is designed to attract 100,000 new residents to the District over the next 10 years and increase home ownership opportunities in the District. The campaign also celebrates the District's diverse neighborhoods and the high quality of life our city has to offer.

Our city's commercial corridors were once the retail lifeline of our city, and today we are trying to bring them back through initiatives including the DC Main Streets program, the H Street Strategic Development Plan, The National Capital Revitalization Commission's plans for Columbia Heights and Skyland, the Southeast Federal Center, and the Anacostia Waterfront Plan.

These plans are setting visions for emerging neighborhoods that will bring new residents, daytime employees and tourists to the District—all groups that will support new restaurants in the city.

We held our restaurant summit at one of the newest and hottest restaurants downtown—Rosa Mexicano. Our downtown has become one of the great restaurant scenes on the East Coast. It is now time to develop similar restaurant scenes in our neighborhoods.

## Transfer of Fort Reno Park to the District

A little piece of history is now part of the District of Columbia. On January 22, I delivered remarks in honor of a unique "shared use" agreement entered into by our Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) and the National Park Service that grants DPR the authority to maintain an existing ball field at Fort Reno Park in the Tenleytown neighborhood of Northwest.

One of our finest public schools in the city, Woodrow Wilson Senior High School, along with the local community, has been trying to renovate the fields at Fort Reno for several years. This agreement between the National Park Service and the Department of Parks and Recreation shows how far the city has come. With this new agreement, DPR has exclusive control over not only the tennis courts but also the existing field property. This exciting agreement permits DPR to develop plans to build a baseball field on the site, which can be used by Wilson High School's baseball team. Currently, the team does not have a baseball field onsite. The National Park Service retains final determination regarding use of the field.

At the ceremony, I commended everyone involved in making this partnership possible, including Woodrow Wilson Principal Stephen Tarason, DPR Director Neil Albert, and Ward 3 Councilmember Kathy Patterson. All of them helped to connect our families, seniors, and young people to recreation opportunities for physical fitness and personal growth.

As I often say, government cannot do it alone. Together we can accomplish so much more. All around our city, people are coming together to renew our parks and green spaces.

I believe the strength and the hope of our young people depends on citizens—individual and corporate—coming together around a vision, as they've done at Fort Reno Park.

This is an excellent example of partnership between the District and its citizen organizations working in cooperation in addressing the needs of our children and our families.





## Mayor's Week in Review

### Mayor Hosts Retail Summit

On **January 28**, I delivered remarks at the District's Retail Summit, which this month focused on our efforts to bring more restaurants to the city. The event was held at Rosa Mexicano, a new restaurant in the Penn Quarter neighborhood near MCI Center.

### Mayor Joins Others to Honor Simpson

On **January 30**, I visited WPGC studios in Lanham, MD for a tribute to morning deejay Donnie Simpson. Donnie was celebrating his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party and his 25<sup>th</sup> year on the air as a radio personality.

### Mayor Delivers Remarks at CAFR Release

On **January 30**, I joined the District's Chief Financial Officer, Natwar M. Gandhi, in releasing the city's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). The report touted our seventh consecutive balanced budget.

### Mayor Delivers Remarks at Lincoln Cottage

On **January 30**, I joined others for an event celebrating the coming restoration of the historic President Lincoln and Soldiers' Home National Monument, also known as Lincoln Cottage, where Lincoln resided when he drafted the Emancipation Proclamation.

### Mayor Joins Maryland Municipal League Officials in Annapolis

On **January 31**, I traveled to Annapolis for a meeting of the Maryland Municipal League, as part of my duties as first vice president of the National League of Cities. We discussed the challenges that cities and towns face, and I spoke of the unique position of the District in relation to the federal government.

### Mayor Meets with Foreign Officials

On **February 3**, I met with Alfredo Sanchez Monteseirin, the Mayor of Seville, Spain, and on **February 4**, I met with Yuri M. Luzhkov, the Mayor of Moscow.

## District Activities



On January 22, First Lady Laura Bush joined Mayor Williams and other officials served food at the Capital Area Food Bank for the "Souper Bowl of Caring."



Mayor Williams met with the Mayor of Seville, Spain, Alfredo Sanchez Monteseirin, for a courtesy visit on February 2.



The Dragons danced during a special Chinese New Year Celebration in Chinatown on January 24.



On January 28, Mayor Williams joined members of the restaurant community at Rosa Mexicano during a meeting to encourage businesses to locate to District neighborhoods.



## Community News

- [Mayor Williams Hails Passage of DC School Choice Bill](#)
- [Mayor Williams Decries Violence](#)
- [New 911 Director to Begin in February](#)

[View all News Releases](#)

## Upcoming Events

<b>2/06 &amp; 2/07</b>	<b>Education Budget Public Hearing</b> Friday: 2:30 pm - 6 pm Saturday: 1 pm - 5 pm 441 4th Street, NW Old Council Chambers, 1st Floor
<b>2/10</b>	<b>Neighborhood Citizen Summit Ward 5</b> 7 pm 125 Michigan Avenue, NE Trinity College
<b>2/11</b>	<b>Neighborhood Citizen Summit Ward 3</b> 7 pm 3401 Nebraska Avenue, NW Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church
<b>2/17</b>	<b>Neighborhood Citizen Summit Ward 8</b> 7 pm 2498 Alabama Avenue, SE Allen Chapel A.M.E. Church
<b>2/18</b>	<b>Neighborhood Citizen Summit Ward 4</b> 7 pm 6008 Georgia Avenue, NW Nativity School
<b>2/19</b>	<b>Neighborhood Citizen Summit Ward 2</b> 7 pm 7th & P Streets, NW Kennedy Recreation Center
<b>2/23</b>	<b>Neighborhood Citizen Summit Ward 1</b> 7 pm 16th & Harvard Streets, NW All Souls Church
<b>2/24</b>	<b>Neighborhood Citizen Summit Ward 7</b> 7 pm 4103 Benning Road, NE Boys & Girls Club
<b>2/26</b>	<b>Neighborhood Citizen Summit Ward 6</b> 1000 G Street, NE Sherwood Recreation Center

